IntegratedEthics *in Action*

FOCUS ON THE WEB

IE ONLINE: LOUISVILLE DEVELOPS PROTOTYPE INTRANET SITE FOR DISSEMINATION TO VISN 9 FACILITIES

*A*s VHA facility staff begin to incorporate the principles, practices, and services of the new IntegratedEthics initiative into their everyday work lives, they need an accessible mechanism to learn how their facility is developing the program and who to contact for ethics concerns and other related matters. A facility or VISN IE intranet site, available to everyone, offers local programs a way to link staff with local, regional and national information about IE.

We asked IE function coordinators to share how they are using the intranet to:

• Report an ethics concern or set up an ethics consult at the facility

• Inform their staff members about what their local IE leaders do and how to contact them

• Advertise IE training and educational opportunities

• Promote local IE resources

Douglas Sloan, PE Coordinator at the Louisville VAMC, has developed a local IE intranet site, and in collaboration with VISN 9 IEPOC Cynthia Williams and Webmaster Matt Rutherford, created a template for use by the VISN and other VISN 9 facilities. The goal? To create a "one-stop source of information for all IE needs within the VISN and each facility." We recently communicated with Mr. Sloan about their website efforts, and here are some of his comments
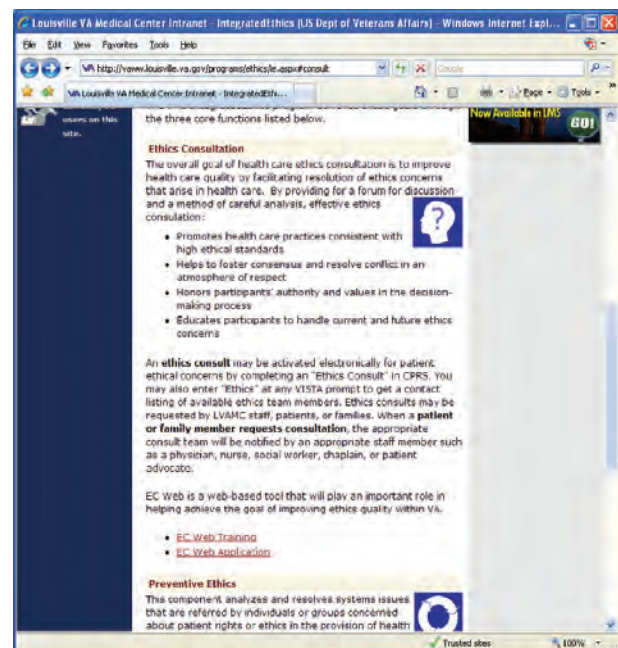
FEATURED FACILITIES/VISNS

and advice. Readers can access the site at http://vaww.louisville.va.gov/programs/ethics/ie.aspx

How was the site developed? Who generated the content?

In an IE Council meeting, we conceived the idea for the site to save staff time and increase their level of exposure to IE materials, staff, and ideas. Launched in May 2008, I use the intranet site to introduce the IE

Using the intranet to ease access to ECWeb: *The IE page includes a direct link to the ECWeb training and the ECWeb application. This feature was added based upon user feedback.*

program during new employee orientations and in-services. During my presentation, for example, I demonstrate how the NCEHC IE website and the 10-minute "Improving Ethics Quality in Health Care" video can be accessed through the site.

With extensive support from Cindy Williams, Dr. Lisa Vuocolo (Louisville IEPO), and Chaplain David Graetz (Louisville ELC), the Preventive Ethics Team decided to expand the scope to include the entire VISN

and so developed a main template for dissemination throughout VISN 9.

How is the template currently being used in VISN 9?

At the VISN level, the intranet now contains an IE area that was modeled after the template that our team developed at **http://vaww.visn9.va.gov/programs/integrate-dethics/integratedethics.aspx**. The VISN is using the site to follow IE Staff Survey activity and foster "*esprit de corps*" among facilities. The site lists the IEPOs for every VISN 9 facility and IE training links. Other VISN 9 facilities, such as Tennessee Valley, have built IE pages based on our template—saving time and effort while establishing a standard design across the VISN. (See: **http://vaww.tennesseevalley.va.gov/programs/ethics/ie.aspx**.)

> **"Every chance we get as an IE Team we point employees to the IE page as their one-stop source of information."**
>
> **Douglas B. Sloan**
> **Louisville VAMC**

How is the Louisville site maintained?

As the PE Coordinator, I serve as the content manager and Matt Rutherford, VISN 9 Web Master, performs the web magic.

Navigating to the IE page: When highlighting IE at special times, we have a direct link (shown above). At other times, IntegratedEthics is a drop-down selection under the "Special Programs" tab at left.

How, specifically, are you testing and using the site in Louisville?

I selected my Preventive Ethics Team, the IE Council, and my service to serve as test groups. Based on their helpful feedback, I continue to improve the site, for example by adding links to ECWeb and the LMS courses. The EC Coordinator and Assistant EC Coordinator use the ECWeb link regularly. We are also marketing our IE page as the preferred page for all IE information needs. This allows us to easily point employees to answers for the questions they ask us all around the facility, such as how to access the IE trainings.

What is your ongoing plan for site maintenance?

As the content manager, I prioritize content for the site based upon information gained from the weekly IE technical assistance calls. Our entire IE team listens to the calls, thereby enabling us to maintain a sense of the local "pulse" and national priorities.

As I receive feedback and update the site based upon user questions, our site becomes more useful and serves as a single point of access to IE activities, topics, and concerns.

What about enhancements?

We are also working on a web-based input form to allow staff to communicate a potential ethics concern. We hope to provide a portal for employees to submit ethics concerns which will be routed directly to the IE program officer who will triage and forward the concern to the appropriate IE team for action. We hope this web-based approach will facilitate tracking ethics concerns by type and team. Our goal is to provide multiple access points to the IE team to report concerns that fall within the domains of IntegratedEthics.

What lessons have you learned?

Leverage your VISN web master and work on this as a VISN initiative from the start. This allows greater economies of scale and helps to get your site active with VISN oversight and approval. Ensure you conduct a thorough pilot test and seek feedback. Continuous feedback and improvement are required until at least the majority of users declare the site

to be user-friendly to the point that they can successfully use the site without show-stopping technical difficulties. Ensure your site is ready to go before marketing! I really believe that as our marketing efforts become fully active, our website will be our platform to success!!! ✎

IE ONLINE: A TALE OF THREE FACILITIES

Central Texas, Jackson, and Puget Sound VAMC sites have also created a web presence for their local IntegratedEthics programs.

Central Texas VHCS, Temple, Texas

http://vaww.central-texas.med.va.gov/integrated_ethics/

Contributors: Richard Tremaine, ELC; Chaplain Thomas Rardin, IEPO and ECC; and Awbrey Lovrien-Moore, PEC.

Site development and content

Very few knew about IntegratedEthics or the online learning modules. Ms. Lovrien-Moore created an area for IntegratedEthics on Central Texas' intranet to remedy that problem.

Ms. Lovrien-Moore developed the information for the site with input from Mr. Tremaine and Chaplain Rardin including a PowerPoint introduction to IntegratedEthics. She and Chaplain Rardin also attended MS FrontPage training. She spent approximately one day on the set-up, including gathering information and creating the pages.

Site maintenance

Ms. Lovrien-Moore continues to update the site. Photographs of the function coordinators and links to the IE Staff Survey (IESS) website and telephone survey were also added.

Feedback and response

The quadrad has been 100% supportive of IE as well as the intranet site, and the IE team has received positive feedback from staff. The site has generated new questions about IE; as well as e-mails focused on

practices or conflicts in, for example, nursing ethics that relate more to methods, programs, policies, or procedures than to single patients.

The IE team will promote the intranet site in the IESS materials and at a staff barbecue. With these planned outreach efforts, the team expects the site to help expand IE knowledge at their facility "exponentially." To track site traffic, Ms. Lovrien-Moore plans to add a hit counter.

Barriers encountered

The team is still dependent on IT to post their pages on the intranet. However, they are considering developing a SharePoint site to makes things more current and interactive. Using SharePoint, content providers can store their IE-related documents and post content in real time—without using special Internet coding.

Lessons learned

"Don't re-invent the wheel. Take what we have, cut and paste, and adapt it to your facility." They also recommended that facilities find web-savvy people to be volunteers. On a more technical note, the site pages should be kept relatively short so that users won't have to scroll much. ✎

G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VAMC, Jackson, MS

http://vaww.jackson.med.va.gov/EthicCommittee.htm

Contributor: Chaplain Tony Beazley, ECC. This link is subject to change. If it doesn't work, please contact Chaplain Beazley at Anthony.Beazley@va.gov or (601) 364-1226.

Site development and content

The site was developed by the medical center's web developer with content and links supplied by Chaplain Beazley.

Site maintenance

Chaplain Beazley sends update and change requests to the web developer as needed.

Feedback and response

"Like anything new, it has been a little slow in having many people utilize the page. As I get the word out more to others in the medical center, it is being accessed more."

Barriers encountered

The main barrier has been the need to ask the web developer to make changes. This takes time. Also, Chaplain Beazley's vision for the website is a little different than the web developer's. Because the Chaplain has created and maintained several web sites for some professional and civic organizations, he is familiar with the process of designing and modifying pages, and wishes he had similar control over the local IE site.

Lessons learned

"My recommendation would be to get the word out about the IE website as soon as possible. Put it at the bottom of everything you print and hand to people. Talk it up in New Employee Orientation and the medical center's newsletter." ✍

VA Puget Sound HCS, Seattle, WA

http://center.puget-sound.med.va.gov/sites/seo/ethics/default.aspx
Contributor: Paul Bauck, IEPO

Site development and content

The site was originally developed using Web Pilot, but was then converted to SharePoint a couple of years ago. The IE team initially developed content from existing paper documents that were used as handouts and references. Content developed during the national rollout of IE was later added.

Site maintenance

Mr. Bauck maintains the web site. He searches for new content and periodically checks for outdated materials. Although maintenance can be very time-consuming, his goal is to change something on the site every week to maintain interest from readers.

Feedback and response

Although there is no hit counter on the site, most of the traffic seems to come from people in the ethics program.

Barriers encountered

The greatest barrier is time. Mr. Bauck notes that sometimes he has limited time to review, develop material, and keep the site as up to date as it should be.

Lessons learned

The specialty areas for key users are the most helpful. Part of the site, for example, provides ethics consultants with all the information they need, which helps streamline their consultation process. Another part of the site is for IE Council members and their business. The team also included a section focusing on iMedConsent.

Keep the site simple in terms of design and formatting. "Don't make users scroll too much. Don't get artsy with design. Stick to the formats VA gives you. Change colors if you want, but not much else. Limit the number of words/letters on a screen."

Facilities should link their sites to others with related interests. ✍

IE websites - lessons learned

- Coordinate with your VISN
- Don't reinvent the wheel
- Get the word out about the IE site early
- Focus on key users
- Simple design and formatting
- Link to related websites

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Looking for . . .

All IntegratedEthics material in one place, organized by type?

http://vaww.ethics.va.gov/integratedethics/ieresources.asp

Ethics Resources organized by ethics domain?

http://vaww.ethics.va.gov/resources/ethicsresources.asp

National Center for
ETHICS
in Health Care